

Senate Loads Up Supplemental Funding Bill

It started out as a straightforward supplemental appropriations bill to provide \$150 million for food to drought-stricken nations in Africa.

But after the House passed H J Res 492 on March 6 and sent it to the Senate, it quickly became a "vehicle" for dozens of unrelated amendments that eclipsed the bill's original intent.

Not only did the bill grow in scope but it grew in size as well. The Senate's version appropriated \$1.2 billion for such diverse items as planes for the Customs Service, support for public broadcasting and a history of the Senate.

For two weeks, as the Senate debated those dozens of amendments, H J Res 492 became known as the El Salvador aid bill. The African food aid appeared to be almost an afterthought.

In fact, anticipating that the debate would be lengthy, the Senate tacked most of the African aid (\$90 million) onto another supplemental in order to make the money available faster. (Congress cleared that measure, H J Res 493, on March 27 and the president signed it March 30.)

Although the Senate finally passed H J Res 492 by a vote of 76-19, the task of reconciling differences with the House looms as another time-consuming obstacle. The issue of military aid to Central America continues to generate controversy.

House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. (D-Mass) indicated that a House-Senate conference may not take place until after Congress returns April 24 from an Easter-week recess.

The conferees will not lack items to discuss. Here is what is included in each version of the fiscal 1984 supplemental appropriations bill:

House

- \$150 million for African food aid and \$90 million in food from Commodity Credit Corporation stocks, to be sold or bartered.

Senate

- \$60 million for PL 480 "Food for Peace" emergency food aid to Africa and \$175 million in loans for the purchase of food by African nations.

Central America Aid.

- \$61.75 million in assistance for the government of El Salvador, including \$49.25 million in military aid and \$12.5 million in medical aid.

- \$7 million to aid refugees in El Salvador.

- \$500,000 to protect jurors and other participants in criminal proceedings in El Salvador, related to the murders of four American churchwomen.

- The president is required to certify every 60 days that the government of El Salvador is making progress toward land reform and democratic policies before aid money can be disbursed.

- The president must report on the whereabouts of U.S. equipment sent to El Salvador since 1980.

- Aid to El Salvador will be withheld if a newly elected president is overthrown or prevented from taking office.

- The aid to El Salvador should be provided immediately, particularly to help the military provide security for the upcoming presidential runoff election.

- \$21 million for the Central Intelligence Agency to aid rebels fighting the government of Nicaragua.

- The Senate urged the U.S. government to send surplus wheat and dairy products to Mexico to help refugees from Guatemala.

- Foreign aid to Panama will be cut off if the Panamanian armed forces cancel or disrupt a scheduled May 6, 1984, election.

- No funds may be used to build permanent military facilities in Honduras without congressional approval or notification by the president that an emergency exists.

Other Appropriations.

- \$545.5 million for child nutrition programs, including school lunches, school breakfasts and meals in child care centers.

- \$300 million for feeding programs for women, infants and children (WIC).

- \$100 million for summer youth training and employment.

- \$70 million for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (\$15 million in fiscal 1984, \$23 million in fiscal 1985, \$32 million in fiscal 1986.)

- \$5 million for PL 480 "Food for Peace" emergency food aid to the Philippines.

- \$3.4 million for two colleges in Pennsylvania.

- \$25 million for the purchase of eight drug interceptor aircraft for use by the Customs Service against airborne drug smugglers.

- \$850,000 for the United States Information Agency to reimburse Nassau County, N.Y., for expenses related to

the 1984 International Games for the Disabled.

- \$61,000 for the Senate's contingency fund to print and sell "A History of the Senate."

Non-appropriations Items.

The Senate:

- Required the Energy, Finance and Judiciary committees to study the impact of oil company mergers and to report to the Senate by July 1, 1984. Any changes recommended by the committees and enacted into law would be effective March 27, 1984.

- Earmarked \$1.38 billion for low-income families and \$920 million for very-low-income families through the Farmers Home Administration rural housing loan fund.

- Required the secretary of agriculture to make available \$5 billion in short-term export credits.

- Authorized a new lock on the Columbia River at an estimated cost of \$177 million.

- Authorized a new lock on the Ohio River at an estimated cost of \$313 million.

- Authorized the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation to borrow up to \$50 million from the Treasury Department to pay indemnities resulting from the 1983 drought.

- Set the maximum salary for U.S. magistrates at \$67,500 and required congressional authorization for any future increase.

- Urged the Navy to reactivate a team of the Naval Civil Engineer Corps (Seabees) to help African nations train construction workers and help with building projects including roads and bridges.

- Barred the National Park Service from contracting out services until Congress has reviewed a study supporting the contract.

- Required the Department of Education to distribute appropriated impact aid funds under a program that assists schools where large numbers of federal employees work or live.

- Disapproved of the president's proposed deferral of \$14 million for construction of the Cumberland Gap tunnel.

- Eliminated the June 30, 1984, deadline for new state participation in the Work Incentive Program and eliminated a three-year limit on participation in the program.

- Required the Office of Surface Mining to release \$1 million from Montana's state share for cleanup work at a mine tailings site near Butte, Montana.

Executive Registry